

The Independent.

Devoted to Agriculture, Mechanics, Arts, News, and General Literature.

J. W. ROBERTS, Editor and Proprietor.

OSKALOOSA, KANSAS WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1860.

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Pictures of Life.

THE BURNING SHIP.

My friend Harry is the happiest of men. He has the most romantic cottage in the vicinity of Philadelphia. It is but nine miles from the city, and near a fine old turnpike, so that a span of blood horses will take you there in forty minutes. His wife is beautiful, sweet-tempered, and loves him devotedly.

"Did I ever tell you of my narrow escape from being blown up in a burning vessel?" said he, one evening, looking at his wife.

I shook my head in the negative.

"Well then," said he, "draw your chair closer to the fire, and I will tell you:

"It was a night in the tropics, during the last war. We had been in pursuit of a heavy merchantman, but a fog coming up, she was shut in from our sight, and for more than an hour remained invisible. Suddenly, however, the moon broke forth, and we saw the chase close-hauled, and on the very point of escaping us. We instantly made all sail, but the wind was so uncertain that the stranger kept his advantage, the air being comparatively still with us, while he had a respectable breeze. At length it fell a dead calm, the chase being by this time several miles off.

"She could now be seen, rising and falling lazily upon her swells, her white sails scarcely moving from her masts. All at once, a cloud of thick black smoke suddenly puffed up her fore-hatchway, followed by a long, vivid stream of fire, that shot up higher into the midnight sky.

"We saw immediately that the flames must have been raging some time in the hold, and that they had attained an intensity which would defy every effort to subdue them. It was a fearful sight. The eager element shot along the rigging, ran swiftly up the foremast, and wrapping the hamper in a sheet of fire, streamed almost perpendicularly upwards of a fathom or two above the tuck. There was no breeze; but the undulations of the atmosphere swept the dense smoke to one side, forming as it were a gloomy curtain against which the lurid flames shone in terrible relief. Every object on board could now be distinctly seen, and we noticed that the whole crew rushed aft. A signal of distress the next instant was shown on that quarter.

"The boats were immediately lowered and the men hurried to their stations and were soon on their way toward the burning ship. But swift as was our progress, that of the destroying element was still more so. The fire had spread with such fearful rapidity as to wrap the whole fore part of the ship in flames, and threatened to consume her before we could arrive. Since it had found vent, it had raged with redoubled fury, until now the shrouds, the foremast, the bowsprit, the yards, everything was sheathed with fire, which, whirling round and round, ascended spirally to the mast-head shooting its forked tongues out on every hand.

"Meanwhile the flames had broken out from the after-hatch, and catching at once to the ratlines, leaped from rope to rope, ran wildly up the rigging spreading almost instantly to the huge lower sails, hissing, flashing, and roaring as they went, until at length the whole ship seemed a mass of lurid fire, and nothing was left untouched but the narrow quarter-deck, on which the now despairing crew had gathered in crowds some eagerly endeavoring to lower the only boat that had escaped the flames, some frantically crying out for mercy. As soon as we were near enough the crew jumped overboard, and were all picked up by the boats. As we turned to go back to our vessel, one of them remarked that there were two persons on board—an old man and his daughter, who were passengers. I gave the order, and our boat was quickly at the side of the burning ship. I mounted her side by a rope that hung over her quarter, rapidly traversed the deck in the midst of tremendous heat, and darted down the companion way, leaving the flames not five feet from its entrance.

"The cabin was a large one, and fitted up with taste. A lady's glove lay on an ottoman, and beside it was an open book; but no other traces of human beings were discernable around.

"The danger meanwhile grew more imminent. I was standing as it were, above a mine that had been sprung, for should the flames reach the magazine, inevitable destruction must ensue. Nor could that catastrophe be much longer postponed. The devouring element had already gained possession of all around, and even now might be eating its way ravenously toward it. Besides, if I paused a moment longer, the fire would reach the companion-way, and all hope of escape from the cabin be cut off.

"Had it been my own life that was endangered, I would not have hesitated in periling it to the utmost; but when I remembered that a dozen gallant fellows from my crew, as well as a score of others from the rescued sufferers, would be involved in my own fate, I could not doubt as to my duty.

"These reflections, however, had not occupied more than the instant in which I had been throwing open successively the doors of the state-rooms. Alas, all were empty! With a heavy heart I was about to mount the companion-way, when I noticed that a massive curtain at the further end seemed to divide off a smaller cabin aft of the one I was in. Without a moment's delay I rushed toward it, hastily lifted it aside, and there I beheld a sight I never shall forget.

"This after cabin was much smaller, but far more luxurious than the other. But after the first hasty survey, I saw nothing but two human beings. One of them was a gray haired man, apparently about sixty five, dressed in a gentlemanly costume of a former day. He was bending wildly over the almost insensate form of a fair girl, reclining on the cushions. Never had I seen a being who looked more beautiful than that pale creature 'seemed at that moment. At the noise made by my entrance she started and raised her head, and then fainted. It was no time to hesitate. Hastily raising the stranger in my arms, I called upon the old man to follow, dashed into the front cabin, up the companion-way, and to my utter horror found the flames had crossed the entrance! For a second I paused. Death was behind, destruction perhaps before. Laying my hand on the old man's shoulder, I urged him ahead, hurriedly threw the shawl of the fair girl around her face and form, made a bold, desperate push for life, and in another instant had gained the quarter-deck. The boat shot to the side, and a dozen arms were extended to receive my burden. I carefully gave it in charge of the nearest, almost slung the old man after, and springing with a bound into the stern sheets, waved my arm and shouted, 'Shove off—board—give way—and if ever you pulled before, pull now, for your lives, my men!'

"I was obeyed. With one soul they bent their brawny arms to the task and made the boat whirl from the quarter, and then sent her with the velocity of a sea-gull over the deep. Not a word was spoken. The old man sat beside me in the bewilderment of gratitude, and astonishment, and only half-dissipated fright—while the form of his still insensate child was extended, unaided for the moment, by his side. It was indeed no time for delay. Every man knew he was pulling for life or death.

"The other boat was nearly a mile ahead, skimming swiftly along from the deserted ship. Far on the moonlight horizon lay our schooner.

"Down to the right was the burning ship, presenting a vast body of lurid fire, that roared along her sides, blazed from her ports, eddied spirally up the masts, and leaped in huge masses up into the sky. Now and then, as her guns became heated, they went off with a roar like thunder. Meantime, the dense smoke gathering in a thick cloud above, hung like a pall over the consuming ship. For some moments the flames appeared to die in part away; but all at once a stream of intense fire, that almost blinded the eyes, leaped perpendicularly up from the decks; the horizon for miles around was illuminated with a light more vivid than that of the brightest noonday; a part of the foremast, lifted bodily out, shot like an arrow almost a cable's length on high; a concussion ensued that made the boat shiver like a reed, and rock a moment, frightfully about—and then a stunning roar followed, sounding as if a thousand

broadside had been discharged at once. For a moment the burning fragments sailed aloft, falling on every hand about; while the boat rolled to and fro upon the agitated swell, we held our breaths in momentary expectation of death.

"But we were most miraculously preserved. The offing we had gained, though not sufficient to ensure safety, proved great enough to relieve us from inevitable destruction. Had any of the falling timber struck us, we should have all gone down together. As it was, it was one of the narrowest escapes I ever had made.

"The deafening uproar recalled the senses of the fair girl at my side. But I will not describe her gratitude, and that of her parent, to myself, whom they persisted in considering the preserver of their lives.

"Suffice it to say, we were soon on board; the captain resigned his own cabin to the strangers, and then I had leisure to learn some particulars concerning their history from the rescued crew. They were easily told. Mr. Thornton, the father of Isabel, was a wealthy West Indian, and was just returning from Great Britain with his daughter, who had been there for several years obtaining her education. Before his vessel sailed, she had been fitted up by Mr. Thornton in a style bordering on eastern luxury, with furniture intended principally for his mansion house at Jamaica.

"Early next morning I received an invitation from Mr. Thornton to call on him. As I entered the cabin, he frankly extended his hand, and presented me to his daughter. I have had many moments of pleasure, but I never felt as I then felt, when Isabel Thornton, extending her delicate hand to me with her sweetest smile, uttered her thanks.

"Many, many years have passed, but I shall never forget the scenes of that eventful night.

"But what became of Mr. Thornton and daughter? I asked, as he concluded his story.

"Isabel is now my bride," said he, turning to his wife with a smile, 'and often, when I speak of the sacrifices she has made in leaving her native land for me, she reminds me with a grateful heart that I saved her life on that eventful night.'

"The wife looked up as he spoke, and—sworn bachelor as I am—I envied Harry the gaze of those confiding eyes.—Recollections of the last War.

Miscellaneous.

TO THE PEOPLE OF KANSAS.

Having made up my mind near a month ago to resign the Office of Governor of Kansas, and that decision being only interrupted by the most unfortunate disturbances in Linn and Bourbon Counties, I now renew the determination. I would withhold the resignation a few weeks longer if I could be of any use in restoring order, allaying public excitement, or in protecting the citizen, in the peaceful possession of his home, but the Government of the United States has seen fit to entrust this to General Harney, than whom no one is more capable of accomplishing all that his restricted instructions permit.

I can therefore be of no more service to you than the able and faithful Secretary of the Territory, Mr. Beebe, on whom the responsibility of my office will temporarily fall.

Since my arrival amongst you two years ago, I think you will bear me witness, that I have labored with an eye single to your welfare. I know this has been my desire, though I may have frequently come short of what was expected. Not believing in the doctrine, that he who fills a public station has performed his mission when he has filled his own coffers 'and played the petty politician, instead of acting the Statesman, and honoring his office by the strictest probity, and the most unselfish performance of duty in his intercourse with every citizen who comes within the influence of his position. I adopted the model I considered based upon honesty, sound reason, and in accordance with the true theory of our Democratic institutions.

Officers were not made for legal plunder, nor our Government for official pecuniary gain. They were made by the people for their own benefit and better preservation of life and property, and when converted into a source of the original purpose, and dissatisfaction and disorder must be the sad consequences.

There are few instances in history where a people throw off a good government, but much oftener submitted even to disgrace and long oppression, in preference to trusting to an effort commensurate with relief.

All good men, therefore, in public position, listen to the people's complaints and if in accordance with law and justice mitigate the evils complained of, and thus restore harmony in the body politic and confidence in the administrators of the law.

If in adopting such maxims as my guide, it has led to misapprehension in any quarter, especially where it was my desire to please, it is my misfortune, and as unpleasant as this may be, it is less so, than the reflection would have been, to leave you forever, over whom I have presided, conscious that I had done you a wrong or failed to do all in my power for your peace and general prosperity. Though differing with a majority of you in politics, I am most happy in my retirement to testify, that on all and every occasion, I have received nothing at your hands, personally, but kindness and a friendly intercourse.

I feel happy too, in saying, that outside of my official duties, I have never lost sight of the great interests of your Territory, or the happiness and welfare, both present and future, of every citizen.

And though present or distant, I shall not forget hereafter that the Territory of Kansas, take it all in all, is one of the most favored portions of the earth for grazing and agriculture. The climate and soil are eminently calculated to nourish, winter and summer, millions of sheep and cattle. For these purposes it has no superior, and I feel as tho' it would not be extravagant to say, no equal. Certainly not within my knowledge. But a community of farmers and herdsmen, above all other people, want a civilization of order, of friendly intercourse, of quiet homes, and a government of the least possible interference. Loafers, vagabonds, and idlers of all kinds, are most aggravating sores in their midst. Most unfortunately this beautiful region of clear skies and rich verdure, has been christened by outlawry and over-run by murderers, thieves and outcasts from every region, attracted by the confusion of forced settlement, and the most untoward intermingling from abroad.

To restore that order now, that should have begun with your beginning, is the bounden duty of every good citizen, of whatever condition, of whatever politics or religion. Editors, Politicians, Divines, should write, and speak, and pray for the one great purpose—perfect peace and a strict observance to the laws, both human and divine. Without this you can have no hope of either contentment or prosperity—happiness will be driven from your hearth stones, and despair drive from your midst your noblest and best citizens. Animosities encouraged and brooded over grow like the weeds of the field and root out every good thing. Threats of personal violence are the weapons of cowards, and the instigation of the assassins dagger in more stealthy hands. Night, which was made for rest and sleep, when converted into carousals, and the gathering of secret clans, with oaths and grips of the order, stimulated to robberies and murders, for some real or fancied wrong, can neither be visited nor countenanced by any upright citizen—by no professing Christian who is not an abomination in the sight of that Being, whom he hypocritically professes to worship.

When the evil-doer is covered with the mantle of public policy, and wrested from the hands of justice as a partisan measure, the axe is laid at the root of our free institutions, and the cruellest of Despotisms, will rise up, a monument of infamy, to mark their place.

Portentous clouds already thicken around the horizon of this most glorious Republic, whose brief path has been strewn with so many deeds of renown and the nobleness of man—until it has become the hope and beacon-light of all nations struggling for freedom, and the envy and dread of Kings and Emperors. In this hour of national gloom, let Kansas spurn disorder from within her borders, and open her almost unlimited prairies, rich and beautiful by the hand of nature, to peaceful abodes, and a retreat from impending strife around the quiet and happy fireside of our fathers and kindred. Happy would I be could I persuade myself that there was such a future for Kansas. After her trial of commotions and disorder can she not step forward as an exemplar, and as the battle-worn soldier, show her past wounds as a warning to others against so sad and frightful an experiment?

Can I not point with some confidence to the Thanksgiving sermon at Plymouth Church, in the town of Lawrence, on the 29th of November, as the day and hour of the inauguration of this prayed for era? Falsehood has done its work—falsehoods spread broadcast in every conceivable shape, until truth was ashamed to appear in public, lie at the foundation of our misfortunes. Let the truth, and nothing but the truth, be plain and emphatically spoken, for truth has a keen edge when spoken from the heart, and your ills will disappear.

You are at present passing through a wilderness of trials, but a patient courage will bring all right again, and like the purification of precious metals, you will shine the brighter after the separation from the dross.

If I can be of any service I will not be slow in speaking in your behalf, and making your wants known. You are in more danger of the exaggerations of untrustworthy individuals than from a disposition in the merciful to give where necessities really exist. He that gives asks and deserves candor, and the plain and simple truth is his only reward.

The Family Sitting-Room.

[We copy the following article from THE HOUSE AND GARDEN, a monthly magazine, published at Cleveland, O.]

This is the pleasantest room in the house. It is that to which the heart of the absent, or home-sick child, always turns; it is the Cæssa of every domestic Mecca. It is the room that makes home; there the family lives, and there the family life flows in its purest, sweetest stream; and hence, we call it the family-room. There is the fountain of the household life; hence, to many of us it is known as the living-room. Though these words are not found in any dictionary, they are found in every heart. Here the family sit together—here, these domestic accomplishments, writing, sewing and reading, are carried on. Here the children play; here, even the cat purrs, and the family dog has his place. This is the only room that is found in every house—large or small. There may be no parlor, no dining-room, no bedroom, no kitchen, but a family room there always is. It may be used for a drawing-room, or a dining-room, or a sleeping-room, or even a kitchen, but it always remains the family room. All other uses are temporary and exigent, this is permanent and perpetual.

As this is the pleasantest room in the heart, it should be made the pleasantest in the house. It should be large and airy; its location should invite the sunshine and air. The furniture should be plain enough not to be formal, and not too plain to be comfortable. If there is room, a few flower pots should grace one of the windows. A book-case is indispensable, and children's books to fill one or more of its shelves. "Robinson Crusoe," "Arabian Nights," and "Pilgrim's Progress," should not be wanting in any family that can afford them. Engravings, now so cheap and good, and particularly stereoscopic views, ought to be the aim of every household. And here let us say, that every one can afford to get what he really wants. What we can't afford to get, is what our envy or vanity craves. The best things for us are those which our heart desires—which we can appreciate—which express our character, and are an extension of ourselves.

Whether such things are books, pictures, or flowers, we can get them; and these, as belonging to the heart, belong to the family room.

The window of this room should have a good outlook, for from it come many thoughts and suggestions to stimulate and adorn the inner life. From the window of this room the children first study Nature. Here, eagerly crowding to the panes, they listen to the monotonous rain, or watch the falling leaf. Here they follow the snow as it comes down in exciting whirles; or dreamily, and with distended eyes, gaze at the large flakes sinking to the ground so pure and noiselessly, as if shaken from the wings of an angel. Here it is, that each day starts afresh the stream of household life. Here, after breakfast, when the larger children have gone to school, and the father to his business, the mother, with the smaller children playing about her, sits doing her more quiet work; peacefully and evenly the current flows on past noon till tea-time, when the larger children, with stronger voices and louder tread, have come from school, and the father from his business; then the stream deepens and widens, and the family life is again at full tide. From this point it begins to ebb. One after another of the tribulations dries up. Little hands grow still, little voices are hushed, little eyes close; the roar of the grate is hushed, its eyes of flame grow dim, and one by one the red coals are quietly sinking to sleep, under the grey ashes; the candle is near the socket, and the mother thoughtfully laying aside her work, gathers up the loose things, putting aside the children's toys, and little shoes and stockings, quietly takes the candle, and like a guardian angel passes out of the family-room, and the day is done. Who can forget the family room? It is the family school room, and should be made the household shrine. Let the parlor, with its finery and formality, be forgotten; the thought of the bed-room may never wake in the mind of the absent child, but let not the sitting-room, the living-room, the family-room die out in the heart of your children, for from that sacred cell is the future home of your child to grow.

With very great respect,
S. McDARY,
Lecompton, K. T., Dec. 17, 1860.

The Family Sitting-Room.

[We copy the following article from THE HOUSE AND GARDEN, a monthly magazine, published at Cleveland, O.]

This is the pleasantest room in the house. It is that to which the heart of the absent, or home-sick child, always turns; it is the Cæssa of every domestic Mecca. It is the room that makes home; there the family lives, and there the family life flows in its purest, sweetest stream; and hence, we call it the family-room. There is the fountain of the household life; hence, to many of us it is known as the living-room. Though these words are not found in any dictionary, they are found in every heart. Here the family sit together—here, these domestic accomplishments, writing, sewing and reading, are carried on. Here the children play; here, even the cat purrs, and the family dog has his place. This is the only room that is found in every house—large or small. There may be no parlor, no dining-room, no bedroom, no kitchen, but a family room there always is. It may be used for a drawing-room, or a dining-room, or a sleeping-room, or even a kitchen, but it always remains the family room. All other uses are temporary and exigent, this is permanent and perpetual.

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The window of this room should have a good outlook, for from it come many thoughts and suggestions to stimulate and adorn the inner life. From the window of this room the children first study Nature. Here, eagerly crowding to the panes, they listen to the monotonous rain, or watch the falling leaf. Here they follow the snow as it comes down in exciting whirles; or dreamily, and with distended eyes, gaze at the large flakes sinking to the ground so pure and noiselessly, as if shaken from the wings of an angel. Here it is, that each day starts afresh the stream of household life. Here, after breakfast, when the larger children have gone to school, and the father to his business, the mother, with the smaller children playing about her, sits doing her more quiet work; peacefully and evenly the current flows on past noon till tea-time, when the larger children, with stronger voices and louder tread, have come from school, and the father from his business; then the stream deepens and widens, and the family life is again at full tide. From this point it begins to ebb. One after another of the tribulations dries up. Little hands grow still, little voices are hushed, little eyes close; the roar of the grate is hushed, its eyes of flame grow dim, and one by one the red coals are quietly sinking to sleep, under the grey ashes; the candle is near the socket, and the mother thoughtfully laying aside her work, gathers up the loose things, putting aside the children's toys, and little shoes and stockings, quietly takes the candle, and like a guardian angel passes out of the family-room, and the day is done. Who can forget the family room? It is the family school room, and should be made the household shrine. Let the parlor, with its finery and formality, be forgotten; the thought of the bed-room may never wake in the mind of the absent child, but let not the sitting-room, the living-room, the family-room die out in the heart of your children, for from that sacred cell is the future home of your child to grow.

With very great respect,
S. McDARY,
Lecompton, K. T., Dec. 17, 1860.

The Family Sitting-Room.

[We copy the following article from THE HOUSE AND GARDEN, a monthly magazine, published at Cleveland, O.]

This is the pleasantest room in the house. It is that to which the heart of the absent, or home-sick child, always turns; it is the Cæssa of every domestic Mecca. It is the room that makes home; there the family lives, and there the family life flows in its purest, sweetest stream; and hence, we call it the family-room. There is the fountain of the household life; hence, to many of us it is known as the living-room. Though these words are not found in any dictionary, they are found in every heart. Here the family sit together—here, these domestic accomplishments, writing, sewing and reading, are carried on. Here the children play; here, even the cat purrs, and the family dog has his place. This is the only room that is found in every house—large or small. There may be no parlor, no dining-room, no bedroom, no kitchen, but a family room there always is. It may be used for a drawing-room, or a dining-room, or a sleeping-room, or even a kitchen, but it always remains the family room. All other uses are temporary and exigent, this is permanent and perpetual.

As this is the pleasantest room in the heart, it should be made the pleasantest in the house. It should be large and airy; its location should invite the sunshine and air. The furniture should be plain enough not to be formal, and not too plain to be comfortable. If there is room, a few flower pots should grace one of the windows. A book-case is indispensable, and children's books to fill one or more of its shelves. "Robinson Crusoe," "Arabian Nights," and "Pilgrim's Progress," should not be wanting in any family that can afford them. Engravings, now so cheap and good, and particularly stereoscopic views, ought to be the aim of every household. And here let us say, that every one can afford to get what he really wants. What we can't afford to get, is what our envy or vanity craves. The best things for us are those which our heart desires—which we can appreciate—which express our character, and are an extension of ourselves.

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